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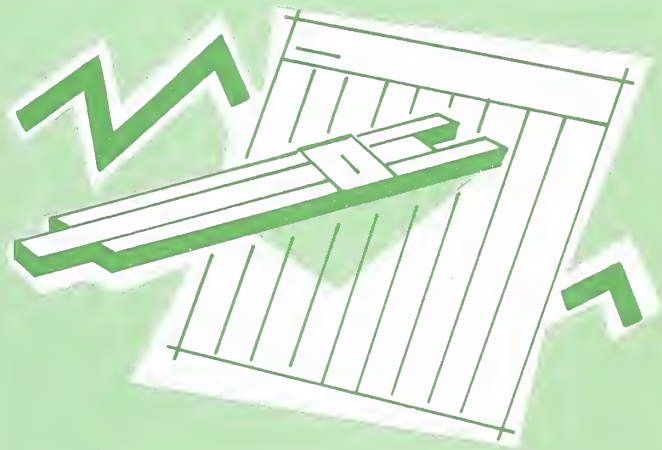
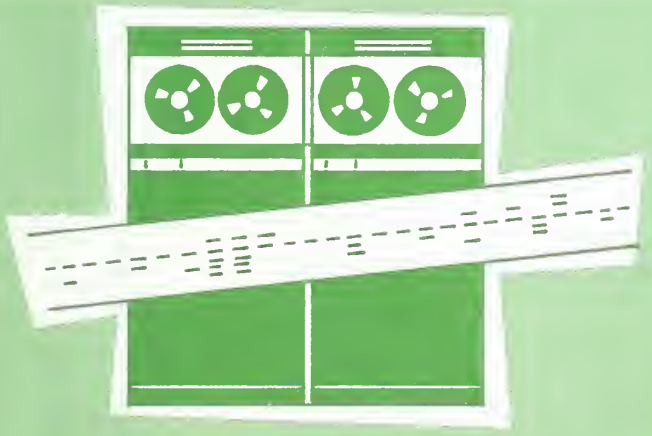
CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

a Career for You in AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

Collecting...



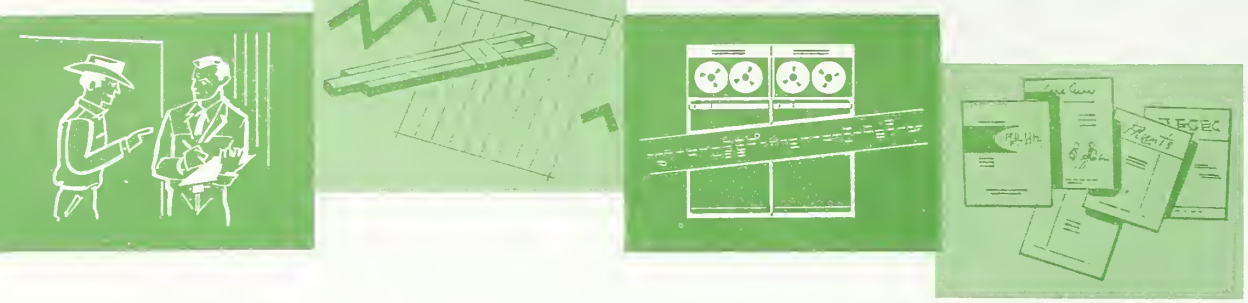
Analyzing...



Computing...

Reporting...

STATISTICAL REPORTING SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



a Career for You in

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

The Statistical Reporting Service is the Nation's chief collector of agricultural statistics. Its primary job is the preparation of forecasts, estimates, and reports of production, supply, price and other aspects of the agricultural economy.

To accomplish this job, the Statistical Reporting Service has, over a period of 100 years, developed into a complex, nationwide organization. It provides a great deal of career flexibility because it has a large number of professional positions; provides opportunity for work involving a variety of crops, livestock, and prices; covers all the United States; and is increasing emphasis on mathematical-statistical techniques and electronic data processing.

The reports include statistics on acreage, yield, and production of field crops, fruits and vegetables, numbers of various types of livestock and poultry, production of animal products, and grain and cold storage stocks. Also included are prices received by farmers for products sold and prices paid by farmers for commodities and services they buy; indexes of prices received and paid; and data on parity prices, farm employment and wage rates. SRS is also responsible for the review and improvement of all U. S. Department of Agriculture statistics.

These statistics find a wide range of users. They help the farmer to chart a course to more efficient production and marketing of his products. They help processors and distributors to more orderly marketing methods that benefit both producer and consumer. They help manufacturers of farm machinery and suppliers locate their best markets. They help lending agencies make decisions on financing a wide range of agricultural business activities. They provide the basis for government actions in the fields of production control, allocations, price supports, conservation, and foreign trade.

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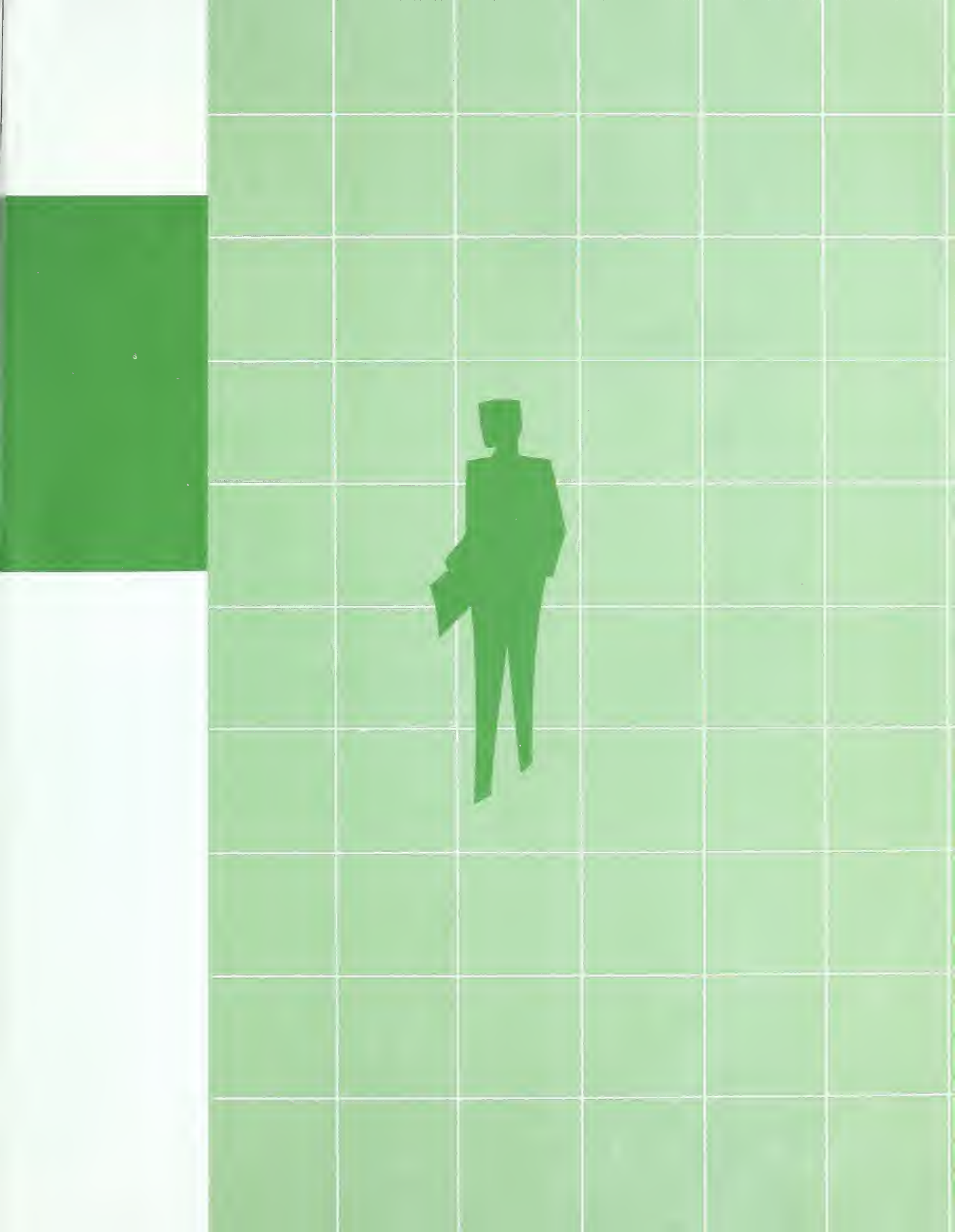

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The technical staff of SRS is composed of Agricultural Statisticians and Supervisory Agricultural Statisticians as well as Mathematical Statisticians. Agricultural Statisticians work as commodity specialists in 43 field offices covering the 50 States of the Union and in Washington, D. C. Mathematical Statisticians are presently employed only in Washington.

Entrance into the service is obtained either through the Student Trainee or the Federal Service Entrance Examinations.

An undergraduate can qualify for Student Trainee positions by passing the examination. He may be employed between terms or part-time during terms with a GS-3 rating ($3,820 per year) provided 1 year of study has been completed; at GS-4 ($4,110 per year) with 2½ years of academic study.

Upon graduation from college he is eligible for promotion to Agricultural Statistician GS-5 ($4,565 per year) without further examination. On January 1, 1964, these entrance salaries will change as follows: GS-3 $3,880; GS-4 $4,215; and GS-5 $4,690.

An undergraduate in his senior year or a graduate can qualify for Agricultural Statistician by passing the Federal Service Entrance Examination and meeting the academic requirements of a bachelor's degree including a minimum of 9 semester hours of college statistics and mathematics, of which 6 semester hours must be statistics. Fifteen semester hours in agriculture are also required. Six additional hours of statistics are required later for qualification as GS-11. SRS has a program for providing the 6 additional semester hours in statistics, through correspondence courses in Statistical Theory and Sampling.

A candidate with a "B" average or ranking in the upper 25 percent of his class will be rated eligible for GS - 7 ($5,540 per year, this increases to $5,795 on January 1, 1964) if he attains sufficiently high score on the written test. A candidate with a Master's degree is eligible for GS-7 upon passing the written test.

The typical SRS statistician starts his career in one of the field offices where most of the starting grade positions are located. Here, under the supervision of the State statistician in charge, are learned the rudiments of the agricultural estimating procedures, particularly so far as they relate to that State. Training progresses in accordance with a definite program, which includes periodic rotation of assignments, to provide for the development of skills in different commodity fields. Data are collected mainly through mailed questionnaires, enumerative surveys, objective measurement surveys, and field travel throughout the State. Statistical work is separated into the following broad subject matter fields: Agricultural prices, dairy, field crops, fruit and vegetables, livestock and poultry, and survey methodology. This work embraces all of the necessary steps in the collection, assembly, evaluation, and preparation of estimates and forecasts, and distribution of agricultural statistics.

Tasks would include questionnaire design, mailing list development and maintenance, field enumerator training and supervision, questionnaire editing, survey summarization, preparation of estimates based on survey indications, and writing of technical reports to the Crop Reporting Board, and news releases and publications to disseminate statistical information on agriculture. With preliminary steps being taken toward the adaptation of SRS procedures to Automatic Data Processing, it is expected that SRS statisticians will receive training and experience in the use of ADP. State office work includes considerable amounts of field travel visiting farmers, ranchers and business establishments in the collection of required sample data and obtaining knowledge of current crop and livestock conditions.

In addition to regularly scheduled estimates and statistical reports prepared for forwarding to Washington for review and publication by the Crop Reporting Board, field offices collect and publish data of particular interest to their States, such as estimates of crop acreage and production and livestock numbers by counties or crop reporting districts. Commodity bulletins for field crops, fruits, vegetables, livestock, and poultry for a State are also published. Preparation of State publications is usually one phase of a statistician's work.

Of the 375 professional statisticians in SRS, 25 percent are stationed in Washington and 75 percent in field offices. Twenty percent of field office statisticians are in the starting grades, GS-5 and 7. The average length of time spent as GS-5 is 6 months and as GS-7 is 13 to 15 months. After approximately 2 years in a field office, a new man who has progressed satisfactorily may be moved to another State office with a somewhat different set of estimating problems. Here, he will be performing in a higher-rated position where, under the tutelage of the statistician in charge, he gains experience for another 2 or 3 years. He may also be enrolled in in-service training courses to increase his proficiency in statistical methods. Later position opportunities will depend upon his demonstrated abilities, his interests, and the needs of the service. Those who show promise for further growth are usually offered an opportunity to gain experience in the Washington office. These appointments are usually at the GS-11 or 12 level.

The Washington staff plans surveys and reviews the estimates submitted by the State offices and as members of the Crop Reporting Board prepare the final reports for the Nation. The commodity specialists travel extensively throughout the production areas keeping abreast of growing conditions.

After a minimum of 2 years of Washington duty, he may be assigned to a more responsible position in Washington or returned to the field, sometimes as assistant head of a State office. SRS offers excellent opportunities for advancement and a satisfying career; in 1962, 36 percent of the professional staff were serving in positions rated at the GS-13 level or higher.

HOW TO APPLY

See the 1963 Federal Service Entrance Examination (Announcement No. 287)

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

FOR GRADE GS-5:

Applicants must meet one of the following requirements:

A. A full 4-year course in an accredited college or university leading to a Bachelor's degree with nine semester hours of statistics (or in combination of Mathematics and Statistics of which at least 6 semester hours must be in Statistics) and 15 additional semester hours of college work in Agriculture or Agricultural Economics. Six additional semester hours in Statistics must be acquired during the first 3 years of employment. These credits may be acquired through correspondence courses at government expense.

B. Course-work as specified in A above, plus appropriate experience and education, which, when combined with the required courses, will total 4 years of education and experience. The education and experience should give the applicant a technical knowledge comparable to that which would have been acquired through successful completion of a 4-year college course.

PAY SCHEDULE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1962

Grade	Entrance Salary	Periodic Increase	Maximum Salary
GS-5	$4,565	$160	$ 6,005
GS-7	5,540	185	7,205
GS-9	6,675	225	8,700
GS-11	8,045	265	10,165
GS-12	9,475	315	11,995

PAY SCHEDULE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1964

Grade	Entrance Salary	Periodic Increase	Maximum Salary
GS-5	$4,690	$160	$ 6,130
GS-7	5,795	195	7,550
GS-9	7,030	230	9,100
GS-11	8,410	280	10,650
GS-12	9,980	330	12,620

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